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WINTER 2007 ORANGE & WHITE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT BROWNSVILLE & TEXAS SOUTHMOST COLLEGE

GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT



Students sign their names on the “signature beam” that was hoisted on top of the future REK Center.

CONSTRUCTION BOOM, HIGHER STANDARDS BUILD TO SUCCESS

Construction dust is flying as The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College experiences its biggest building boom in 20 years.

Enrollment was at an all-time high in the fall semester, as 17,642 students signed up for a rapidly growing number of degree plans offered by UTB/TSC—including a first-ever doctorate in education.

But developments in enrollment, programs and state-of-the-art new buildings are not the only factors driving growth on campus. In the fall, university leaders established a new policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), designed to ensure a boom in student academic success as well.

SAP requires students to maintain a 2.0 minimum GPA as well as completing 70 percent of semester credit hours attempted in order to remain in good academic standing. This parallels the policy already in place for students who receive financial aid.

Construction crew members hoist the “signature beam” into place at the topping-out ceremony.



“We believe the new SAP guidelines will have a positive impact on our enrollment in the long term,” said Dr. Charles Dameron, vice president for Academic Affairs. “The policy will be more easily understood by our faculty, staff, and students, and, therefore, easier to apply fairly. We will be able to intervene earlier in our students’ academic careers to ensure they graduate on time and avoid incurring unnecessary debt.”

Dameron said the SAP policy will “motivate all the students in the class to shoot for the best possible grade they can make.”

Higher quality and commitment to success go hand-in-hand with all the new developments on campus. The number of degree programs has doubled since 1991, and more have been added each year, including several new master’s programs. More than 18,500 degrees have also been awarded.

As a result of this growth, a greater demand has emerged for new and updated classrooms, research labs and lecture halls, resulting in \$140 mil-

lion in new construction projects to be completed over the next four years.

In October, the campus community watched as the “signature” beam was placed atop the framework of what will become the Recreation, Kinesiology and Education Center, signifying a milestone and marking the near completion of the \$25 million, 150,000 square-foot facility.

“We will do more construction over the next four

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UTB/TSC FAST FACTS

Enrollment:	17,642
Programs:	Bachelors: 63 Masters: 21 Doctoral: 1
Degrees Awarded:	18,500 since 1991
Research Dollars Awarded:	\$5,272,629

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Academic Progress (SAP)



A DECADE OF DRAMA AND PERFORMANCE



Members of the Bravo Opera Company perform scenes from "The Mikado" by Gilbert & Sullivan

Ten years ago, an opera company in Brownsville was just another audacious idea from a brand new border university that was willing to take risks to achieve excellence.

Now, a decade later, the Bravo Opera Company stages two opera presentations a year, sends top-flight students to prestigious national competitions and brings home accolades to The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College.

Bravo Opera Company celebrated its 10th anniversary on November 17 with a concert-style gala featuring UTB/TSC opera alumni Kristin Ezell and Michael Callas. Honored guests included George Ramirez, president of the Brownsville Society for the Performing Arts; scholarship patrons James and Gloria Zellerbach; and the family of late music department pianist Mary Annionette James.

Bravo Opera Company was the brainchild of director Amy Brownlow and Dr. Sue Zanne Urbis, chair of the Fine Arts Department. Its goal was to make this beloved, but often misunderstood genre, come alive, for Brownsville audiences.

Then a part-time voice instructor at the university, Brownlow had just come back from performing in Italy.

"Sue Zanne was very much the inspiration. She said, 'what if we were to start an opera group here in Brownsville?' Brownlow recalled. "I thought absolutely, it was a dream come true."

Brownlow recruited an original troupe of 10 in-

cluding two talented high school students and eight UTB/TSC voice students who had never studied opera before. Because the fledgling company had no ready cache of costumes or sets, its first performance was a medley of famous opera scenes.

"We didn't know how the public was going to respond," Brownlow said. "It turns out that we had a sold-out room. Not a big room, of course, but we had to turn about 100 people away. We thought it was a pretty big success!"


In the years that followed, the company would log 21 full-blown productions, including "The Elixir of Love," "Don Pasquale,"

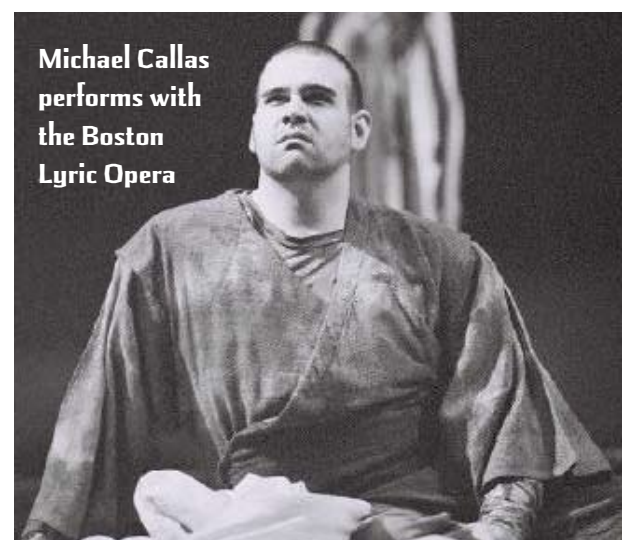
"The Mikado," and "Die Fledermaus." This spring brings its 22nd production, Mozart's "The Magic Flute." The company also reached out to the community with numerous neighborhood performances of "Hansel and Gretel."

For the 10th anniversary celebration, Brownlow sent homecoming invita-

tions to 110 of her former opera students. Michael Callas, who was in high school when he joined the company, said the opera company was his springboard to a successful opera career.

"It launched me...totally," said Callas, a baritone who just finished a season with the Boston Lyric Opera. "I had more on my resume, more actual opera experience, more solid knowledge of opera because of Amy and the group."

Alumna Kristin Ezell, who recently performed at Carnegie Hall in New York City, also discovered her passion for opera through the teachers and students of Bravo Opera Company. "I just had to be in the right place at the right time. UTB/TSC was that for me." 



Michael Callas performs with the Boston Lyric Opera



Kristin Ezell performs at Carnegie Hall



Vikki Camacho, soprano, Bravo Opera Company, dreams of an opera career.



DR. GARCÍA HONORED AS DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA



Dr. Juliet V. García was honored in September with The University of Texas at Austin's Distinguished Alumni Award, the highest alumni award given by The UT System's flagship university.

García earned her doctorate in communications and linguistics from UT Austin in 1976.

"UT Austin opened the doors for me and it changed my life and that of my family's, but it did so much more," García said after receiving the traditional burnt-orange blazer given to each of the honorees.

García said the traditions and the beauty of the campus made a strong impact on her, but it was the professors who inspired her the most.

"I wanted more than anything to join their ranks," she said. "They flung the door open for me and invited me in and for that I am eternally grateful."

Other 2007 DAA recipients included Brownsville

native Tony Garza, ambassador to Mexico and former chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission.

The Texas Exes created the award in 1958 to recognize alumni who have distinguished themselves professionally and through service to the university.



THE UTB/TSC DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS AWARD

We invite you to bring to our attention deserving candidates for the Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Nomination Deadline: February 1, 2008

To request a nomination form, contact the Office of Development at (956) 882-4233.

ALUMNI PROFILE: SYLVIA CASARES-COPELAND

Brownsville native Sylvia Casares-Copeland doesn't just cook. She created Sylvia's Enchilada Kitchen, where West Houston patrons flock to get her hand-crafted Tex-Mex delicacies named after border towns like Harlingen and San Benito.

This fall, The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College alumna also launched her first DVD "Hot Tamales! A Primer on the Ancient Art of Tamale Making" and cookbook duo featuring her carefully tested recipes and traditional techniques.

"People love to eat tamales, but the tradition and the art of tamale making is not being taught. In some families, there are no recipes because the people who knew how to make them are not here anymore," Casares-Copeland said. "Creating my DVD is a way to help families bring back the tradition of tamale making."

Passionate and particular about everything she does, Casares-Copeland was the first Latina student body president of Brownsville High School. After graduating in 1971, she took summer classes at what was then Texas Southmost College.

"It was a very good school. The faculty and the students were very friendly," she recalled. "And they were very pro-

student. They seemed to be all about the students."

After earning a degree in home economics from The University of Texas at Austin, Casares-Copeland learned about flavor and scientific method in Uncle Ben's test kitchen, and then began to explore the restaurant business.

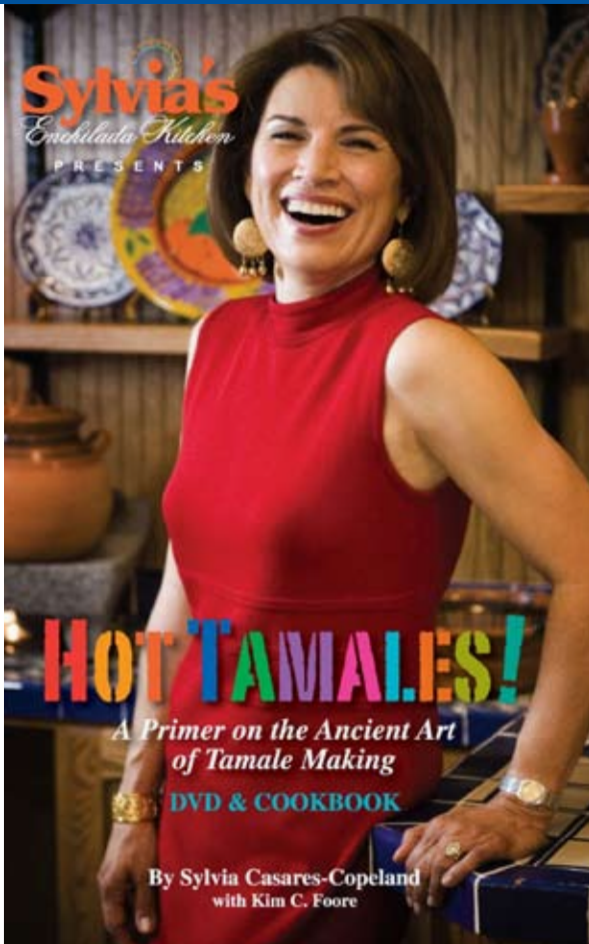
She realized her dream in 1998 when she opened her own restaurant in Houston. She soon renamed it Sylvia's Enchilada Kitchen, both to distinguish it from thousands of other Mexican restaurants in town and to emphasize her most famous menu items.

Since praised by Texas Monthly, Martha Stewart and Rachel Ray, Casares-Copeland credits her success to her insistence on fresh ingredients and her painstaking reformulation of each new recipe.

The restaurant also includes a cooking school, which has become her television studio. She teaches "Tamales 101" to dozens of eager Houston cooks.

Dubbed "The Queen of Tex-Mex Cuisine," Casares-Copeland's motto for cooking would make good advice for life: "The minute you start taking shortcuts, you start losing flavor."

The DVD "Hot Tamales! A Primer on the Ancient Art of Tamale Making,"retails for \$19.49 and is available at her website, SylviasEnchiladaKitchen.com.





STUDENT PROFILE: AMANDA FLORES



UNIVERSITY INAUGURATES MATH & SCIENCE ACADEMY

Amanda Flores always dreamed of becoming a veterinarian, but after spending a few months at The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College Mathematics and Science Academy, a new world of careers has opened up for her.

This fall, Flores and 29 other high school juniors became the first class for this unique learning opportunity.

"I didn't know there were so many opportunities revolving around science," said Flores, a 16-year-old from Los Fresnos. "Now I am trying to decide what I want to do, but I have so many things I can look into and I am discovering more each day. It is such a great opportunity to be in this program for so many reasons."

For Flores, some of those reasons include free tuition and books, as well as the opportunity to

earn up to 68 hours of college credit with UTB/TSC professors as she completes high school.

"Both of my parents are teachers and there are five of us, so the thought of a free education really interested me," Flores said. "Plus, I feel I am getting more than what is taught in the classroom. I am learning a lot about what it means to be in college and about time management."

The academy was created during the 79th Texas Legislature in May 2005, and it is only the second of its kind in the state. Students who are accepted finish their junior and senior high school years at the university.

Although the academy's main focus is math and

science, students take a variety of other courses, including communications, English and government.

Students enrolled in the academy may be in high school, but they also have the opportunity to integrate with college students outside the classroom.

Students enjoy the extra-curricular activities any other UTB/TSC student has, including attending athletic events, joining clubs and even participating in the nationally recognized chess team.

"It is really exciting to be on campus," Flores said. "Although I do miss my friends back at my old high school, I have made a lot of new friends and I am having a really good time. I know I made the right choice when I decided to come here."



A CLOSER LOOK: MATH & SCIENCE ACADEMY

The Mathematics and Science Academy is a new program for Texas 11th and 12th grade high school students interested in math and science. Students selected take college classes on campus taught by UTB/TSC faculty while allowing students to complete two years of college concurrently with high school.

Students who qualify:

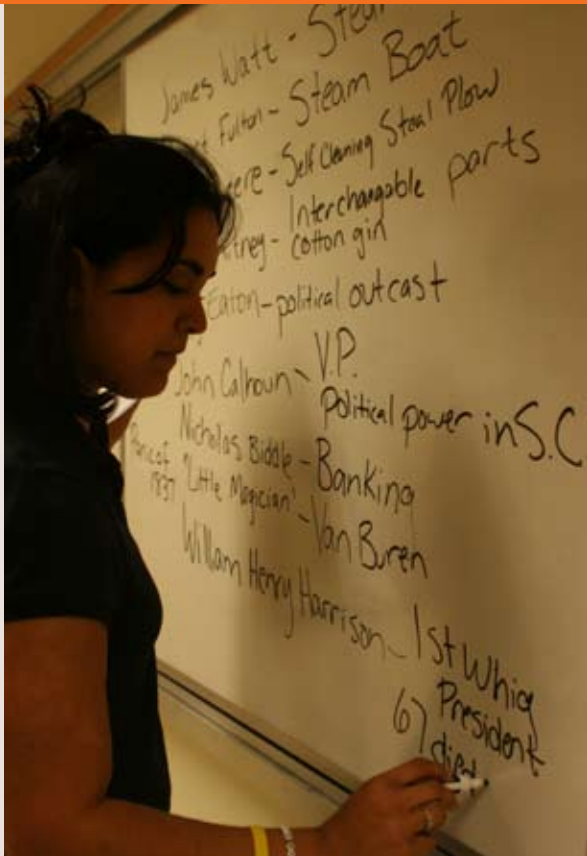
- Must take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT I). The score should be competitive with at least a 1070 composite score for math (500 minimum) and reading (500 minimum)
- Transcripts of all school work from the seventh through tenth grades, showing excellent grades preferably in honors, GT, and AP courses and completion of algebra I, II and geometry before entry to the academy.

The academy is funded by UTB/TSC, and it covers tuition, fees and books.

During their course work, students must complete at least 60 required semester credit hours and will earn a high school advanced diploma. Students have the opportunity to earn an associates degree at UTB/TSC. Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0. Tutoring is available to students in math and history.

Academic advisors provide assistance with degree plans and possible elective course schedules. High school counselors assist students with individual counseling, college readiness, scheduling, scholarship information, and SAT preparation.

For more information call (956) 882-5742 or email principal Edward Argueta at edward.argueta@utb.edu or counselor Belia E. Vela at belia.vela@utb.edu.





EDUCATION WITHOUT BORDERS



ATHLETICS ADDS GLOBAL DIVERSITY TO STUDENT LIFE

There’s an international flavor among student-athletes in Scorpion Athletics. Thirty five student-athletes represent 12 foreign countries spanning four continents.

The addition of men’s and women’s soccer—the most widely played sport in the world—has attracted 20 of the 35 international student-athletes into the first-year program.

Each with a desire to receive a bachelor’s degree in the United States and play the sport they love is very important.

Eight of the men’s soccer players come from England. For those groups, Scorpion baseball coach Joel Barta and men’s soccer coach Dan Balaguero were very influential in their decisions to attend UTB/TSC.

Balaguero, a native of England, recruited several players from his home country, some of whom played for him at Virginia Intermont College, which dropped its intercollegiate soccer programs.

The English soccer players are enjoying the American experience in South Texas.

“Coach Dan was emailing me every day, and made me feel like he really wanted me here,” said freshman Tony Vernaschi. “I never heard of Brownsville, but it appealed to me because I always wanted to be near to the beach. I also wanted to be south, where the weather is warmer.”

Freshman Stuart Rodgers said college life is very

different in the U.S.

“I always knew I wanted to come to America to play soccer in college,” Rodgers said. “University life here is very different. They have more of a variety of courses that you have to take as your core courses. In England, you specialize in a degree, and don’t take general education courses. Here you are exposed to a variety of different subjects.”

Most of the international student-athletes appreciate UTB/TSC and Brownsville.



“The university itself is very good, I’m enjoying it very much here, especially the weather,” said freshman soccer player Aaron Scutt, a native of Lincoln, England. “It is a very different culture, but it’s something that I appreciate.”

The culture of the area, however, did require some getting used to.

“It’s so different here, being exposed to many different cultures,” said Serbian native Marco Malovic, who plays for the men’s soccer team. “I like the Mexican culture and the Mexican food, especially quesadillas. They don’t have those in Serbia.”

For soccer player Fernando Mendoza, a native of Granada, Spain, Brownsville reminds him of home.

“This area is a lot like Spain, so I’m very comfortable here. I want to continue my studies here and major in International Business, this is the right place for me. I am really enjoying it and I’m glad I came here.”



Stuart Rodgers, England



Christin Resing, Germany



Ruben Hernandez, Mexico

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT-ATHLETES BY SPORT

Baseball

Canada	7
Puerto Rico	2
Mexico	1
Total Baseball	10

Men’s Soccer

England	8
Scotland	2
Serbia	2
Canada	1
Mexico	1
Spain	1
Total Men’s Soccer	15

Men’s Golf

Canada	1
Total Men’s Golf	1

Women’s Soccer

Brazil	1
Canada	1
Germany	1
Scotland	1
Sweden	1
Total Women’s Soccer	5

Volleyball

Brazil	1
Kenya	1
Peru	1
Puerto Rico	1
Total Volleyball	4

Student-Athletes By Country

Canada	10
England	8
Puerto Rico	3
Scotland	3
Brazil	2
Mexico	2
Serbia	2
Spain	1
Sweden	1
Germany	1
Kenya	1
Peru	1
Total	35

CONTINUED FROM COVER

years than we have been able to do in the last 20 years,” said Dr. Juliet V. García, UTB/TSC president. “These facilities, along with our exemplary faculty and dedicated staff will provide our students with the tools to help them succeed.”

The critical need for campus elbow room is also being addressed as work crews just broke ground on a classroom building and the university’s second library.

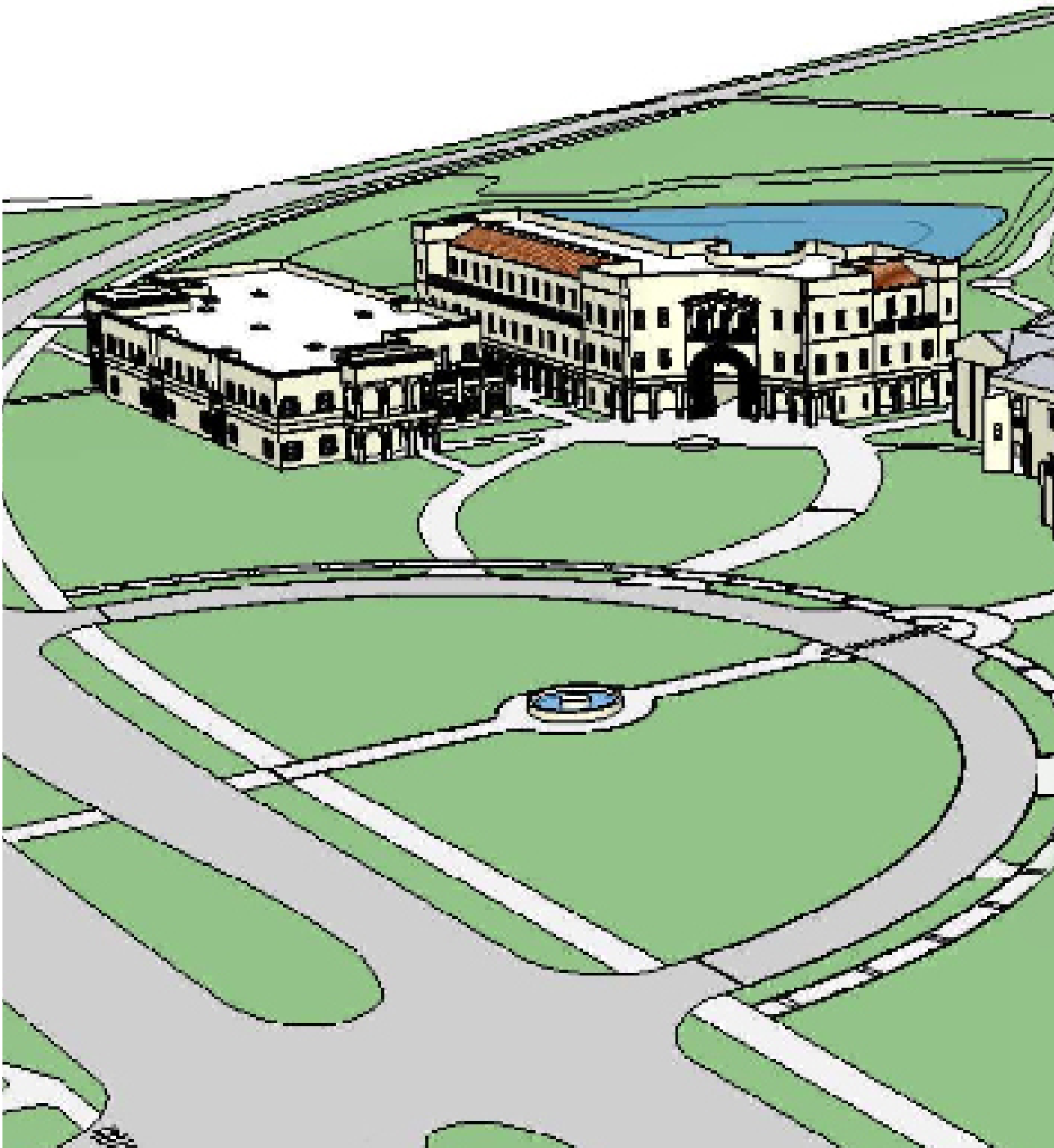
Next door to the Education and Business Complex, the three-story, 43,000 square-foot library will offer the latest in information technology, distance learning labs, individual and group study spaces, and an Internet café. The new classroom building will house ten classrooms, including two extra-large lecture hall-style classrooms.

As the dust generated by work on these new buildings continues to fly, other projects are poised to leap from their drawing boards, including a music hall, the Center for Early Childhood Studies and a new science and technology building.

BOND ISSUE PROJECTS

- \$68 million in bond funding
- \$63.4 million in other funding
- \$526,000 saved in roofing materials with TXMAS Purchasing Co-op
- \$727,452 saved by purchasing brick in bulk
- \$405,782 saved by purchasing construction insurance in-house at a group rate
- 2.8 million bricks will be used
- 947 jobs and more than 40 businesses created at the ITEC Campus
- 1,200-space University Boulevard parking lot was the first bond-funded project

BUILDING TODAY, MAPPING TOMORROW



STAR AWARDS: PROGRAMS RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE



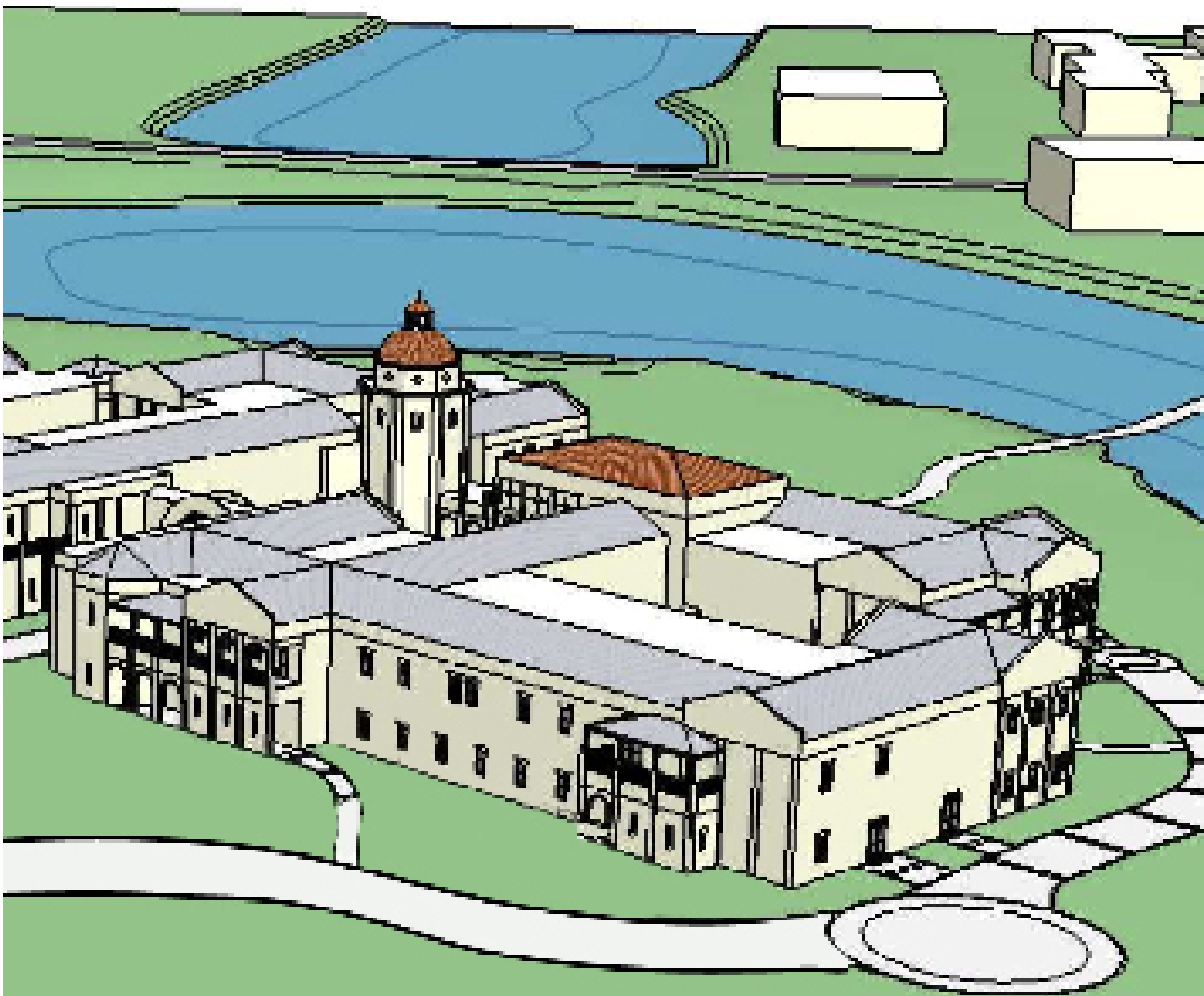
Left to right: Shanta Goswami; Dr. Raymund Paredes, Texas commissioner of higher education; Ray Martinez and Juan Andres Rodriguez

State higher education leaders singled out The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College this fall as the only campus with three finalists in this year’s prestigious state Texas Higher Education Star Awards.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board uses the Star Awards to recognize college programs that are helping “close the gap” in research, excellence, success and participation of minority students.

UTB/TSC’s three finalists include:

- **Upward Bound Math and Science (UBMS).** This program encourages high school students with math and science interests to prepare for college and earn college credits. In the past two years, the program has included four students who graduated from high school with an Associate of Arts.



The New Library and Classroom Building will join the Education and Business Complex in a short walk across the resaca footbridge from the Student Union and down University Boulevard from the new REK Center. The north view of the Library will look across the Lozano Banco Resaca, a part of the on-campus nature preserve.

• **Student Employment Initiative (SEI).**

This program helps students graduate on time, and with higher grades, by providing on-campus employment in their area of study. SEI jobs pay better than a typical work/study job, and participating students are closely mentored by supervisors who also serve as career role models. Students in this popular and successful program average a 3.1 GPA.

• **Office of Premedical Education Program (OPEP).** This program addresses a shortage of health professionals in Cameron County by encouraging students interested in attending graduate or professional schools. It includes guidance and assistance to students, plus an annual schedule of events promoting contact with the medical community, medical schools, and research institutions. Several UTB/TSC graduates have gone on to medical school through the Early Medical School Acceptance

Program, which is part of OPEP. This was the program's second year as a Star finalist. UTB/TSC was recognized for its strong showing among colleges and universities who are "thinking outside the box in what they bring to higher education." "It's just exciting to be here," said Dr. Shanta Goswami, director of OPEP. "It is a great feeling to be a finalist, and we came back this year with three finalists. We hope to be back next year and win." Program directors Ray Martinez of UBMS, Juan Andres Rodriguez of SEI, and Dr. Shanta Goswami of OPEP attended the awards ceremony in Houston and were pleased to see their efforts publicly endorsed. "Becoming a finalist was something that I didn't expect," Martinez said. "This was a great recognition for all the extra work we've been doing in the past year."

REMEMBERING A VISION



Ellen Richards receives commemorative partnership pin.

Old friends and founders of the partnership between the University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College returned to campus in the fall for a special convocation honoring their vision. Former UT System executives, TSC board members, state legislators and faculty leaders gathered to close out the 15th anniversary celebration of the partnership. The sometimes emotional reunion included a daughter of the governor who championed Brownsville's higher education goals and signed this unique educational creation into law in 1991. Recalling her mother, the late Ann Richards, Ellen Richards said her mother's deep affection for South Texas began on a first visit in 1956. Her respect and understanding of South Texas was channeled into legislation aimed at ending longstanding state neglect, Richards said. "One of my mother's greatest achievements as governor was her support of this partnership," Richards told the crowd. "Congratulations on everything you've accomplished. You've done incredible things here." Founders of the partnership—including many of the 178 faculty and staff who worked on campus when the partnership began received special commemorative pins featuring the UTB/TSC signature scorpion. Speaker after speaker, including UT System Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dr. David B. Prior, praised local educational leaders for their continuing commitment and hard work over 15 years. "It has been a wonderful ride!" said former TSC Board Chair Mary Rose Cárdenas. Former TSC trustee Michael Putegnagat agreed that UTB/TSC's remarkable growth proves "risks can pay and a great new idea can begin in Brownsville, Texas."





Q&A WITH CHARLES DAMERON



DR. CHARLES DAMERON: VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

This fall, a policy for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), which measures a student's performance and academic status based on grades and completion rate, was adopted after a recommendation by the Academic Standards and Student Records Committee.

The new policy requires students to maintain a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) and a 70 percent course completion rate.

Q. Why is SAP necessary?

A. Many students who were borrowing money to finance their education and are not performing well academically were getting deeper into debt. Most of these students have become discouraged

and then dropped out altogether, never completing the program they had been pursuing. Because of the state government's growing concern about students' completion rates, we hope to encourage students to complete the courses they sign up for and progress more rapidly toward graduation. We believe that this renewed emphasis on maintaining good academic standing will help motivate students to take the right steps to be successful, and by doing so, they have the potential to raise the quality of learning in every one of their courses.

Q. How is the revised SAP different from years past?

A. We have made the revised policy less complicated than the previous one. In the past, there

were different GPA levels depending on how many hours students had attempted, and it was difficult for faculty and staff to advise students effectively about their academic progress because of the sliding scale. We are now intervening sooner than we did in the past, and we are introducing strategies to help students who have fallen below the SAP standard to return to good standing.


Q. What measures is the university taking to help students achieve SAP?

A. We have launched an extensive campaign to alert students to the revised SAP standards through brochures, information in the student newspaper and announcements on the electronic course bulletin board. In addition, we have met with faculty departments and staff to encourage them to spread the word to students and emphasize the importance of setting the SAP standard for good standing as their goal every semester. We want students to be aware of the consequences and understand that if they do run into some serious problems—whether academic, personal, financial, or work related—we have professionals in every area to assist them.

“We believe that this renewed emphasis on maintaining good academic standing will help motivate students”

Q. What kinds of goals does the university hope to reach with SAP?

A. We know that the great majority of our students are serious about pursuing a certificate or degree that can provide a valuable credential for employment, and we are committed to helping them identify problems as early as possible so they can complete their program of study and move on to their next goal. Ultimately, we expect that we will retain a higher percentage of students and graduate a larger number of students. If we are successful in achieving these goals, our community will reap the benefits of a better prepared workforce and a better informed citizenry.

Dr. Charles Dameron can be reached at (956) 882-8975 or at charles.dameron@utb.edu. His office is in Gorgas Hall. 





EARLY ALERT PROGRAM



PROGRAM PROVIDES MENTORSHIP FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS

Like many college students at one point or another, Lourdes Troncoso found her personal life encroaching on her educational career.

Although it was just one bump in the road, it wasn't until she received a call from the Student Success Center that she found how that small mishap could affect her GPA and how she could fix it.

"I was like a lot of other students," Troncoso said. "I went to class and that was it. I never knew that certain things affected my overall GPA so much. But then I got a call from Mrs. (Thelma) Sullivan."

As part of the Early Alert Program, an initiative that brings together staff and faculty to mentor students who are at potential academic risk, Sullivan, assistant director of Student Success, called Troncoso and asked her if she would like to be part of the voluntary pilot program.

"I really miss that one-on-one time with students and being able to counsel them," Sullivan said. "This program gives me the opportunity to do that and help a student in any way that I can so they can succeed."

In May, the Early Alert Program was transformed to increase student outreach, especially with the implementation of the new Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) guidelines, said Director of Student Suc-

cess Dr. Beatriz Becerra.

"Before, students who could be a part of the program were identified by faculty members, but, by that time they had already failed a test or quiz, or were absent more than three times," she said. "This year, we decided to contact students who were below the 2.0 GPA early to give them the opportunity to get on track. We have also paired students with volunteer mentors around the campus to listen and give advice to students, which I think has really helped."

Both Troncoso and Sullivan agree.

"Mrs. Sullivan helped me plan my schedule to make sure I made up those classes that I should have done better in to pick up my GPA," she said. "She helps me with a lot and gives me great advice. I hope other students take advantage of the opportunity they are given."



QUESTIONS ABOUT SAP?

Please call the Academic Advising Center at (956) 882-7514 for more information.

STUDENT SUCCESS FAST FACTS

- UTB/TSC is the national leader in Hispanic graduates for math, science and education.
- UTB/TSC was named "Chess College of the Year" by the United States Chess Federation in 2007.
- School of Education has had a 100 % passing rate for school counseling graduates on the state certification exam for more than 5 years.
- A 94% passing rate for the TExES certification exam for teachers.
- More than an 87% passing rate for the NCLEX certification exam for nurses.
- Nursing students have a 100% employment rate upon graduation.
- Department of Criminal Justice is ranked 8th in the nation for Hispanic serving institutions.
- The UTB/TSC Music Division has a 100 percent pass rate on the TExES state exam.
- More than 400 local students achieved an average of a 3.4 GPA with a 97% retention rate during the inaugural Summer Bridge Program.
- About 200 of the area's brightest students have received free tuition, fees, housing and books through the University Scorpion Scholars Program since its inception in 2006.
- This year, more than \$67 million were awarded to students in federal aid and scholarships.





DLS: FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER HOPES TO BUILD BRIDGES



The Distinguished Lecture Series has been bringing thought-provoking internationally renowned speakers to campus since 1999.

This year, former Mexican Foreign Minister Jorge G. Castañeda brought binational perspective to the annual event, which benefits faculty and student research, competitions and other projects for which state funds are inadequate.

Appointed in 2000 by former Mexican President Vicente Fox to handle issues like narcotics control and trade relations, Castañeda is a Global Distinguished Professor of political science and Latin American studies at New York University.

"We've actually made a lot of progress over the last 10 or 15 years," Castañeda said. "It's not perfect. But we can manage this relationship and are managing it better today than ever before."



Essay award winners pictured here from left to right: first place, Nathan Janis; second place, Emmanuel Guajardo; third place, Alexis Sheedy.

Castañeda also spoke at a mid-morning assembly of hundreds of lower Rio Grande Valley high school and college students. The student lecture and essay contest are unique features of the lecture series and offer an opportunity to share internationally respected speakers with area youth.

Castañeda selected and announced the winners of the essay contest, sponsored by Valley Baptist Health System, titled "How I Would Solve Mexico and USA Border Issues in the Rio Grande Val-

ley." Students at 13 area schools wrote 228 contest essays.

Castañeda said America's immigration issue can be solved by legalizing the young workers who cross the border to find work and pay. He said many young Mexican citizens stay temporarily to send money to relatives or live comfortably back home.

A proposed 700-mile border wall will not be effective at curbing illegal immigration, Castañeda said.

The Distinguished Lecture Series began in 1999 and is an important fundraiser for the university, providing support for student and faculty trips, research and projects for which state funds are unavailable.

Valley Regional Medical Center again was the founding sponsor of the Distinguished Lecture Series. Others lecture series sponsors included Cardenas Auto Group, Wells Fargo, Texas State Bank, Coca-Cola, JP Morgan Chase, Southern Texas Title Company, and Marcis & Associates.

DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROFILE: PAQUITA CHAVEZ



Paquita Chavez said she notices and understands the hard work The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College students put into their studies to better themselves.

She, too, focused on academics and studied library science geared toward children and the medical community in Brazil, Mexico and her native Peru. She earned an English as a Second Language degree at UTB/TSC.

"I think that education changes how to live," Chavez said.

She was named to the UTB Development Board in 2003 by President Dr. Juliet V. García.

"The university is experiencing positive growth," Chavez said. "I think the university brings a very cultural aspect to the community, and people will start seeing Brownsville as a university town."

She said the most important thing the university needs now is money, particularly to grow endowments to give students and faculty future opportunities to learn, travel, compete and grow.

"I think we are gaining respect," Chavez said. "It's not a little town with a little university but, it's a growing town with a good university."

Chavez moved to Brownsville in 1990. Since that time, she has worked to improve the quality of life by becoming active in organizations like the Brownsville Society for the Performing Arts, the Brownsville Public Library Foundation and Cameron-Willacy County Medical Alliance.

She has been honored on both sides of the border for her community work, including being named the Local Active Women's Woman of the Year in 1999.

A SALUTE TO OUR DONORS

Community outreach to help students achieve their educational goals at The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College continues to grow with the announcement of several new endowments.

Frost Bank has established the **Frost/Forrest L. “Champ” Jones Memorial Scholarship Endowment** in the School of Business.

A check for \$10,000 was announced at the inauguration of Frost’s first location in Brownsville.

“Frost continues to grow in the Valley and we are pleased to extend our presence in Brownsville,” said Raymond Jenkins, Frost Rio Grande Valley chairman. “The secret to that success is a lot of hard work and education.”



The endowment is named in memory of Jones, an attorney and former chairman of the board of the Alamo Bank of Texas, now Frost Bank.

In the **State Employee Charitable Campaign**, staff and faculty could donate a specified portion of each paycheck, or a one-time gift, to more than 500 local, state and national charitable organizations.

This year, the campus community gave \$28,009 to numerous charities including the TSC Foundation. The SECC is one of the largest state employee campaigns in the nation.

The Cameron County chapter of the Philippine Nurses Association of Texas has established **The Philippine Nurses Association of Texas-Cameron County Inc. Nursing Scholarship Endowment** for the School of Health Sciences.

Chapter President, Antonio B. Jayoma, a member of the faculty in the Associate Degree Nursing Program, encouraged members to give back to the community in which they work.

When Syd Goodwin and Carol McNabb married in August, they asked their guests to forgo the traditional wedding gifts and, instead, donate to the **Goodwin Harpsichord Fund**.

“ We just thought it would be a nice thing to pur-



chase a harpsichord for the Fine Arts Department and help our students,” said Goodwin.

Kids Voting USA – Brownsville Endowment received a \$10,000 gift from the Public Welfare Foundation of Washington, D.C. The announcement was made during a birthday celebration for the Rev. Armand Mathew’s 85th birthday.

Mathew serves as executive director of the Kids Voting USA-Brownsville project. The program combines classroom instruction, and an authentic voting experience to secure the future of democracy by preparing young people to be educated, engaged voters.

To consider an endowment, please call Barry Horn, associate vice president for Development at (956) 882-8708 or barry.horn@utb.edu.



The President’s Circle supports the Annual Fund Campaign, which supports students, faculty and programs for which state resources are either inadequate or non-existent. Donations to the President’s Circle Fund enable the university to invest additional resources in students and faculty. Join us in thanking our 2007 donors!

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